



cartilage or bone inducing activities as a mature protein encoded by the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

- 21. The antibody according to claim 20, wherein said antibody is a monoclonal antibody.
- 22. An antibody or antibody fragment according to claim 20, which specifically binds to a protein of the TGF-ß family wherein said protein comprises the amino acid sequence according to SEQ ID NO:3.
- 23. The antibody according to claim 22, wherein said antibody is a monoclonal antibody.
- 24. An antibody or antibody fragment which specifically binds a protein of the TGF-ß family, wherein said protein is encoded by a DNA comprising a nucleotide sequence selected from the following group:
 - (a) the nucleotide sequence as show in SEQ ID NO:2,
- (b) a nucleotide sequence which is degenerate as a result of the genetic code to the DNA of (a),
- (c) a nucleotide sequence which hybridizes under the following stringent hybridization conditions to the DNA in (a), or (b): hybridization at a salt concentration of 4X SSC at 62°-66°C followed by a one-hour wash with 0.1X SSC and 0.1% SDS at 62°-66°C, and

- - (d) fragments of (a), (b) or (c) which encode a protein which has essentially the
- same cartilage or bone inducing activity as a mature protein encoded by the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:2.
- 25. An antibody or antibody fragment according to claim 24, wherein said protein comprises the amino acid sequence according to SEQ ID NO:4.
- 26. The antibody according to claim 25, wherein said antibody is a monoclonal antibody.
- 27. The antibody according to claim 24, wherein said antibody is a monoclonal antibody.

28. A method for detecting a protein of the TGF-ß family,

comprising incubating an antibody or antibody fragment which specifically binds to a protein of the TGF-ß family with a sample suspected of containing said protein, and detecting any antibod protein complex formed as an indication of the presence of said protein,

wherein said protein is encoded by a DNA comprising a nucleotide sequence selected from the following group:

- (a) the nucleotide sequence as shown in SEQ ID NO:1,
- (b) a nucleotide sequence which is degenerate as a result of the genetic code to the nucleotide sequence of (a), and

(c) fragments of (a) or (b) which encode a protein which has essentially the same cartilage or bone inducing activities as a mature protein encoded by the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

29. A method for detecting a protein of the TGF-ß family, comprising incubating an antibody or antibody fragment which specifically binds to said protein of the TGF-ß family with a sample suspected of containing said protein, and detecting any antibody/protein complex formed as an indication of the presence of said protein,

wherein said protein is encoded by a DNA comprising a nucleotide sequence selected from the following group:

- (a) the nucleotide sequence as shown in SEQ ID NO:2,
- (b) a nucleotide sequence which is degenerate as a result of the genetic code to the DNA of (a),
- (c) a nucleotide sequence which hybridizes under the following stringent hybridization conditions to the DNA in (a), or (b): hybridization at a salt concentration of 4X SSC at 62°-66°C followed by a one-hour wash with 0.1X SSC and 0.1% SDS at 62°-66°C, and
- (d) fragments of (a), (b) or (c) which encode a protein which has essentially the same cartilage or bone inducing activity as a mature protein encoded by the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:2.
 - 30. A kit for detecting a protein of the TGF-ß tamily, comprising

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an antibody or antibody fragment which specifically binds to a protein of the TGF-ß family, and

a reaction buffer

wherein said protein is encoded by a DNA comprising a nucleotide sequence selected from the following group:

- (a) the nucleotide sequence as shown in SEQ ID NO:1,
- (b) a nucleotide sequence which is degenerate as a result of the genetic code to the nucleotide sequence of (a), and
- (c) fragments of (a) or (b) which encode a protein which has essentially the same cartilage or bone inducing activities as a mature protein encoded by the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.
- 31. A kit for detecting a protein of the TGF-ß family, comprising an antibody or antibody fragment which specifically binds to a protein of the TGF-ß family, and

a reaction buffer,

wherein said protein is encoded by a DNA comprising a nucleotide sequence selected from the following group:

- (a) the nucleotide sequence as shown in \$EQ ID NO:2,
- (b) a nucleotide sequence which is degenerate as a result of the genetic code to the DNA of (a),
- (c) a nucleotide sequence which hybridizes under the following stringent hybridization conditions to the DNA in (a), or (b): hybridization at a salt concentration of